The Territorialization of Identity: Sikh Nationalism in the Diaspora[1]

Giorgio Shani
Kitakyushu University, Japan

In recent years, Sikh nationalism has attracted much scholarly attention. Whilst some scholars have focused on 'the struggle for Sikh sovereignty' within the Indian state of Punjab (Pettigrew 1995, Deol 2000, Singh 2000), others have stressed the key role played by the Sikh diaspora in the search for statehood (Tatla 1999, Axel 2001). According to Darshan Singh Tatla, 'the Sikh diaspora, through its location and involvement in Punjabi affairs, has helped in providing an ideological framework…redefining Sikh ethnicity in terms of an ethno-national bond' (Tatla 2001:185). Arjun Appadurai goes so far as to claim that *Khalistan*, the 'land of the pure' or Sikh homeland, is 'an invented homeland of the deterritorialized Sikh population of England, Canada and the United States' (Appadurai 1990:302). For both Tatla and Appadurai, Sikh nationalism is seen as a *diasporic* phenomenon.[2]

This article seeks to examine Sikh nationalism in the diaspora. It will be argued that Sikh diaspora nationalism is concerned with instilling a sense of the global unity of all Sikhs *through* an involvement in the politics of the homeland.[3] This is achieved through the articulation of a Sikh nationalist discourse disseminated through the Internet for consumption by the diaspora. The Internet has, therefore, created a space for the imagination of a global Sikh identity. The agents responsible for the articulation of a Sikh nationalist discourse in the diaspora are not 'official' Sikh organizations with institutional ties to the Sikh political parties in the Punjab, but diasporic organizations operating outside what may be termed the Sikh political system.

Typology of Narratives on Sikh Identity

In western societies, we can isolate three *interrelated* 'master narratives' which locate the Sikhs as subjects. The first narrative identifies the Sikhs as followers of a universal world religion, such as Islam or Christianity. The second narrative identifies the Sikhs as a politicized ethnic community or nation (Dusenbery 1999:127-142). The third narrative identifies overseas Sikhs as a diaspora and the Punjab as their homeland or place of origin. Sikh diaspora nationalism may be seen as relying on the interpellation of overseas Sikh communities as members of a Sikh nation forced from their homeland of the Punjab and not as believers of a universal world religion.

The first narrative identifies the Sikhs as followers of a universal world religion, such as Islam or Christianity. Sikhism is seen to consist of a series of doctrines and practices centered around a reading of a holy book, the *Guru Granth Sahib*, written in a sacred script particular to the Sikhs (*gurumukhi*), in a Sikh place of worship, *gurdwara*. Anybody can become a Sikh, as long as one is baptized and conforms to the established practice of the *Khalsa Rahit*

(code of conduct). Baptized (*amritdhari*) Sikhs following the edicts of the tenth *Guru*, Gobind Singh, are enjoined to keep their hair, including facial hair, long *(kes)*; to carry a comb *(kanga)*; wear knee-length breeches *(kachh)*; to wear a steel bracelet on the right hand *(kara);* and to carry a sword or dagger *(kirpan)*. Those who embody these five symbols of Sikh identity, known as *Kes-dhari* Sikhs, constitute the *Khalsa,* or 'community of the pure' whilst *Sahajdhari* Sikhs, 'slow-adopters' may eventually progress towards full participation in the *Khalsa* (McLeod 1989:96). These five symbols of Sikh religious identity, developed in opposition to prevalent 'Hindu' cultural practices, serve to construct boundaries between Sikhs and other communities, making *Kes-dhari* Sikhs an easily identifiable group in both an Indian and diaspora context.

The origins of this narrative may be traced back to the pre-colonial *panthic* tradition of Northern India. A *panth*, consisting of those religious ideas and practices concerned with spiritual experience, may be used to identify the devotees of a specific spiritual leader. The Sikhs were the disciples of Nanak who organized themselves into a 'community of the pure' under Guru Gobind in order to resist forced conversion to Islam. For Darshan Singh, the *Khalsa* was 'a logical culmination of the *sangat* (congregation) or *panth* founded by Guru Nanak Dev' (D. Singh 1999:177). J.P.S. Uberoi sees in the *Khalsa* 'a society for salvation and self-realization' to which anybody can belong (Uberoi 1996:74). The *langar*, a common dinning-room situated in a *Gurdwara* in which meals are served to all, irrespective of caste or even creed, may be seen as constitutive of such a universal society. Caste barriers in particular are broken down by this tradition of compulsory commensality facilitating the individual's quest for salvation as part of a community of equals. Indeed, all *Khalsa* Sikhs, irrespective of caste, adopt the name *Singh* (lion) and *Kaur* (princess) when initiated into the *panth*. This narrative, of Sikhism as a world religion, is strongest amongst *Khatris*[4] from West Punjab, 'twice-migrant' *Ramgharias*[5], and of course, the tiny minority of *Gora*[6] Sikh converts in advanced capitalist societies. In the imagination of these Sikh communities, the Punjab represents not so much a 'homeland', as it does for *Jat*[7] Sikhs with relatives and perhaps, property, in East Punjab, but a 'holy land'.[8]

In recent years, the traditional interpretation of this narrative, which in the English-speaking world dates back to Macauliffe's six volumes on *The Sikh Religion* (1909), has been challenged by modern historians and anthropologists working in western academic institutions. For Verne A. Dusenbery, the master narrative of world religion is an historical product of modernist discourse and a related ethno-sociology (Dusenbery 1999) – a conclusion supported by Harjot Oberoi's account of the construction of religious boundaries in the colonial Punjab. For Harjot Oberoi, 'religion, as a systemized sociological unit claiming unbridled loyalty from its adherents and opposing an amorphous religious imagination, is a relatively recent phenomenon in the history of the Indian peoples' (Oberoi 1994:17). Oberoi argues that at the beginning of the colonial period, not only was there no cohesive or homogeneous Sikh community, there was no single definition of a Sikh. The Punjab may be seen as having been characterized by a simultaneity of religious identities, as well as by clan, caste, household and village ties and 'most Sikhs moved in and out of multiple identities, defining themselves at one moment as resident of this village, at another as part of that caste; and at yet another as belonging to a sacred tradition' (Oberoi 1994:420). Sikhism, or rather the Sikh tradition was seen to embrace a multiplicity of smaller traditions of which the *Kes-dhari* was one. That Sikhism today may be seen to have a dominant *Kes-dhari* cultural framework is a result of the activities of the *Singh Sabha* movement. *Singh Sabhas*, associations or societies of *Kes-dhari* Sikhs, played a key role in the construction of ethno-religious boundaries in the Punjab through their strategic and ideological elucidation of a *Tat Khalsa* discourse which negated a large terrain of Sikh belief and practice (Oberoi 1994:305).

The second narrative identifies the Sikhs as a nation with definite physical boundaries, those of the Indian state of Punjab. The Sikh community, seen from within this nationalist narrative, corresponds to A.D. Smith's definition of a politicized *ethnie,* or nation. For Smith, an *ethnie* is a 'named human population with myths of common ancestry, shared historical memories and one or more elements of a common culture, including an association with a homeland and some degree of solidarity, at least amongst the elites' (Smith 1999:13). The Sikh *ethnie* share common ancestry myths dating back to the founding of the Khalsa in 1699 and historical memories of martyrdom and persecution under successive Mughal, British and Indian rulers. Furthermore, since the overwhelming majority of Sikhs are Punjabis, Sikhs share a common language (Punjabi), an association with a homeland (the Punjab) and their own political system comprising of a Sikh 'parliament', the *Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee* (SGPC), and a 'Sikh' political party, the *Shiromani Akali Dal* (SAD). The SGPC affords the Sikhs a forum to legislate on all issues concerning the community and its headquarters in the *Akal Takht* is the site of all spiritual *and* temporal power within Sikhdom. The *Jat* dominated SAD, which has controlled the SGPC ever since its inception, is committed to looking after Sikh interests. Seen from inside this narrative, the Sikh nation has its origins in a Punjabi *ethnie*. Sikhism is seen as indigenous to the Punjab. Not everyone can be a Sikh; one is born into an *ethnie*, or ethnically defined community.

This ethno-symbolist view of the Sikh nation is reflected in the recent work of Sikh scholars as well as in the nationalist narratives in the Punjab as articulated by actors operating within the Sikh political system. In *Religion and Nationalism in India: The Case of the Punjab* (2000), Harnik Deol illustrates how the origins of modern Sikh national consciousness (1947-95) lie in the historical roots of Sikh communal consciousness (1469-1947). For Deol, a specifically Sikh ethnic identity based upon the Sikh religious tradition and Punjabi language pre-dates colonial rule. Consequently, the introduction of print capitalism in the colonial period merely 'energized' the existing tendencies towards differentiation between the diverse religio-linguistic communities of the Punjab rather than, as in Benedict Anderson's formulation, creating a radically different consciousness (Deol 2000:90). Like Deol, Gurharpal Singh believes modern Sikh identity to be 'remarkably cohesive' (Singh 2000:87) having its roots in a *Jat* Punjabi *ethnie*, 'a sacred text and religious tradition dating from Guru Nanak' (Singh 2000:78). This view is shared by hegemonic Sikh organizations operating within the Sikh political system. For the Council of Sikh Affairs, 'the Sikh thesis, as laid down by the Gurus, is that they have a separate religion and culture and that in order to safeguard it they must maintain their distinct, socio-political entity' (Council of Sikh Affairs 1983:18). Central to this nationalist narrative is the *territorialization* of Sikh socio-political identity in the homeland of the Punjab. As early as 1946, the SGPC committed itself to the 'goal of a Sikh state' and therefore, the territorialization of the Sikh *qaum.* The Sikh people needed a state of their own to 'preserve the main Sikh shrines, Sikh social practices, Sikh self-respect and pride, Sikh sovereignty and the future prosperity of the Sikh people' (SGPC 1946).

The origins of this nationalist narrative can be traced back to the colonial period and the rise of the *Singh Sabha* movement articulating a *Tat Khalsa* discourse.[9] Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha's *Ham Hindu Nahin* (We are not Hindus), written over a century ago, may be seen as one of the most influential expositions of what the Council of Sikh Affairs terms the 'Sikh thesis'. For J.S Grewal, Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha's work can be seen as a 'declaration of Sikh ethnicity' (Grewal 1999:250). The Sikhs, sharing a collective socio-religious identity, were seen to constitute a political community, a *qaum*. For Grewal, Nabha equated *panth*, with *qaum* and paved the way for the politicization of the Sikh community under the SAD. Although modernists such as Paul Brass agree that 'the Punjabi speaking Sikhs are a people objectively

distinct in religion, though not in language, from other ethnic groups in the north (of India), who have succeeded in acquiring a high degree of internal social and political cohesion and subjective self-awareness,' (Brass 1974:277) they question the cultural homogeneity upon which Sikh elites have based their claims for nationhood. For Richard Fox, the militant Sikh self-perception as 'Lions of the Punjab', the Punjab's natural military and political elite, is in part a re-appropriation of the colonial depiction of the *Kes-dhari Singhs* as 'true' Sikhs. As the British believed the *Singhs* to constitute a separate race, possessing a distinctive physiognomy, habitat, behaviour and appearance, the colonial state strove to treat the *Kes-dhari* Singhs as a distinct community and thus 'foreshadowed the reformed Sikh… identity propounded by the Singh Sabhas' (Fox 1985:10). The role of the *Singh Sabha* movement in the construction of cultural boundaries has been highlighted by the work of Rajiv A. Kapur (Kapur 1986) and Harjot Oberoi (Oberoi 1994), whilst Paul Brass sees the SAD as having played a key role in the construction of a Sikh national identity. For Brass, 'the Akali Dal has not been simply been a political expression of pre-existing Sikh aspirations, but it has played a critical role in creating a modern Sikh nation' (Brass 1974:433). However, it is only within the last two decades that the Sikh nationalist narrative became hegemonic amongst male, *Jat Kes-dhari* Sikhs in the Punjab and the diaspora displacing alternative narratives based upon regional, caste and religious identities. This has coincided with the rise of diasporic organizations operating outside the Sikh political system.

The third narrative identifies the overseas Sikh communities, numbering over one million out of a total Sikh population of between 16 (Tatla 1999:11) and 17 million (Axel 2001:9) collectively as a diaspora. Although the overwhelming proportion of this overseas Sikh population had migrated in the post-colonial era, the rise of Sikh mass migration outside South Asia can be traced to the posting of Sikh soldiers to British colonies by the British colonial army in the nineteenth century. Rural *Jat* Sikhs, designated as a 'martial race' by the British colonial authorities (Fox 1985), were stationed in South East Asia (Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia) and East Africa (Kenya and Uganda). From there, Sikh migrants with army connections sought to settle in the West, particularly on the Pacific coast of North America where communities were established before the imposition of anti-immigration legislation in the early twentieth century (Leonard 1990). The partition of the Punjab following the creation of the independent successor states to the British *raj*, India and Pakistan, in 1947, had the effect of creating a large internally displaced Sikh population within India who formed the backbone of post-war Northern Indian migration to the UK. They were joined in the UK by *Ramgharia* Sikhs (Bhachu 1985) following political changes in East Africa in the early 1970s. Today, half of the overseas Sikh population has settled in the UK (400,000-500,000) with Canada (147,440) and the USA (125,000) the preferred destination for the more upwardly mobile (Tatla 1999:43).

Diaspora, derived from the Greek verb *sperio* (to sow) and preposition *dia* (over) (Cohen 1997:ix), has come to be used to describe any deterritorialized[10], transnational[11] community. James Clifford has appropriately called it a 'travelling term in changing global conditions' (Clifford 1997: 244). Whilst in earlier times, the term diaspora was reserved for the Jewish and Armenian dispersion, it now, according to the editor of the journal *Diaspora*, 'shares meanings with a large semantic domain that includes words like immigrant, expatriate, refugee, guest worker, exile community (and) ethnic community' (Tölölian 1991:4-5). The narrative of diaspora as applied to the Sikhs relies upon what Brain Keith Axel terms *the place of origin thesis* (Axel 2001:8-9). The argument is that the place or origin or 'homeland', regardless of birthplace, *constitutes* the diaspora. Sikh claims to being a diaspora are therefore contingent on securing a 'Sikh' homeland.

Most attempts at providing 'ideal-type' definitions of diaspora subscribe to the place of origin thesis. For William Saffran, diasporas are expatriate minority communities, dispersed from an original 'center' to at least two 'peripheral' places. They maintain a memory or myth about their original homeland; they believe they are not, and perhaps cannot be accepted by their host country; and they see an ancestral home as a place of eventual return and a place to maintain and restore (Saffran 1991). Similarly, Robin Cohen suggests dispersal from an original homeland, often traumatically is the central characteristic of a diaspora community (Cohen 1997). Applying Cohen's criteria, Darshan Singh Tatla has convincingly made the case for the inclusion of the Sikhs as a global diaspora (Tatla 1999: 5-8). Tatla in his seminal study of the Sikh diaspora, identified the Sikhs as a 'victim' diaspora[12], which has been mobilized by what he considers to be a single critical event- the storming of the Golden Temple complex in Amritsar in 1984 by Indian troops (Tatla 1999:6). From Tatla and Axel's attempts to account for the formation of a Sikh diaspora, we can conclude that narratives of a Sikh diaspora are contingent on two factors: (1) the existence of a 'homeland' and (2)'forced' dispersion from it. Both of these factors are key features of the Sikh nationalist discourse in the diaspora.

Sikh Diaspora Nationalism

The Sikh nationalist discourse as articulated by diasporic organizations such as the British-based *Khalistan Council*, the US-based *Council of Khalistan* and the various branches of the *Babbar Khalsa International*, *Dal Khalsa* and *International Sikh Youth Federation*,[13] identifies the Sikhs as an ethno-religious community, forced from their homeland of the Punjab by the violence of Partition and 1984. The existence of a territorially defined homeland is central to the imagination of Sikh diaspora nationalism. Sikh diaspora nationalists, like other nationalists, do not, in the words of A.D. Smith, 'seek to acquire any territory. They want their "homeland", that is, an historic territory which their people can feel is theirs by virtue of a convincing claim of possession and efflorescence sometime in the past' (Smith 1999:219).

In the imagination of Sikh diaspora nationalists, 'the homeland' is *equated* with the Indian state of Punjab. The 'ancestral homeland' of the Sikh nationalist imagination, however, does *not* correspond to the present day borders of the Indian state of Punjab. Some of the 'great events that formed the nation', to which A.D. Smith refers and the place where 'the heroes, saints and sages of the community from which the nation later developed lived and worked and… are buried' (A.D. Smith1996: 383), lies to the West in Pakistan. This includes the birthplace of the founder of the Sikh religious tradition, Guru Nanak. Sikh nationalist organizations in the diaspora do not lay claim to those lands but instead seek to invest those shared memories within the borders of the East (Indian) Punjab. Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulukh, the President of US based *Council of Khalistan*, in his millennium message to the Sikh 'nation', writes of a 'sovereign, independent nation' established by Guru Gobind Singh. Sovereignty, given to the Sikh peoples by Guru Gobind, was 'lost' to the British and then the Hindu *raj* in Delhi. Aulukh urges the Sikhs to reclaim their 'lost sovereignty' through the establishment of an independent Sikh state in the *Indian* state of Punjab (Aulukh 2000a). Surjan Singh, of the *Babbar Khalsa International* regards the Sikhs and the Punjab to be 'interchangeable elements.' The Sikhs are seen as the 'true sons of the soil', having defended the Punjab from 'the foreign Afghan' and having valiantly resisted the British until 1849 (Singh 1982:15) – a view shared by Dr. Jagjit Singh Chauhan, President of the *Khalistan Council*. For Chauhan, the Khalsa Sikhs are the 'vanguard of the Punjabi peoples'.[14] *Khatri* Sikhs originally from West Punjab but resident in Vancouver, Ramgharia Sikhs from East Africa and Jat Sikhs born and bred in Birmingham, are enjoined to regard East Punjab as the 'homeland' irrespective of actual place of origin. The Sikh nationalist discourse in the diaspora therefore territorializes Sikh identity.

Sikh diaspora nationalism plays upon collective experiences of forced dispersal or 'flight following the threat of violence' (Gilroy 1997:318) shared by other ethno-religious diasporas. Of key importance to the Sikh diaspora nationalist discourse is the concept of the *ghallughara* translated in English as 'holocaust' or 'genocide' – a term borrowed from the Jewish and Armenian experiences in the twentieth century. The homepages of both *Burning Punjab* and *Khalistan.com* explicitly use this term in conjunction with state repression of Sikhs in India, that (they claim) has claimed a quarter of a million lives in the last two decades (Osan 2000, Aulukh 2000a). According to this discourse, the Sikhs are seen to have experienced two 'holocausts' in the twentieth century, which have both served to facilitate the construction of cultural and religious boundaries between the Sikhs and the other main ethno-religious communities in their 'homeland' of the Punjab. The first was partition. The partition of the Punjab province of the British Empire into two new successor states, India and Pakistan, caused one of the 'greatest human convulsions of human history' as 11 million people moved either side of the Radcliffe line. Partition was marked by a high level of organized communal violence with hundreds of thousand slaughtered whilst travelling between West and East Punjab. The 'ethnic cleansing' was significantly accompanied by widespread sexual savagery with an estimated 75,000 women abducted and raped by men of religions different from their own, which served to reinforce communal boundaries (Butalia 1998:3). Although Sikhs played an active role in 'cleansing' East Punjabi villages of Muslims, the nationalist discourse in the diaspora portrays the Sikhs exclusively as *victims* rather than participants in this 'ethnic cleansing'.

The second 'holocaust' suffered by the Sikhs was the storming of the Golden Temple in Amritsar by the Indian government in 1984. For Darshan Singh Tatla, 'the Indian army's assault on *Harimandir*, the holiest shrine in Sikh perception, constituted a "sacrilege", a slur on a nation's dignity and integrity, an act of genocide' (Tatla 1998: 28). The assassination of the Prime Minister, Indira Gandhi in October 1984 by her Sikh bodyguards, precipitated the worst communal riots in India since partition. As with partition, the communal violence was highly organized and attacks upon Sikhs in Delhi were orchestrated by the ruling Congress Party. More than two thousand Sikhs died in the Delhi suburbs alone as Sikh homes and businesses were targeted (Khilnani 1997: 53). The actions of the Indian state gave rise to the view among overseas Sikhs that the very existence of the Sikh *panth* was in danger. For the *Council of Khalistan* 'after the Golden Temple attack in June 1984 by the Indian government it was clear to the Sikhs that the Indian government was determined to destroy Sikhism completely. The attack on the Golden Temple was conducted to crush the Sikh aspirations of *Khalsa Raj*' (Aulukh 2000).

The ethnic boundary created by violence in the Punjab, helps explain the transformation in the consciousness of Sikhs living overseas. Indeed, it can be argued that a specifically Sikh identity in the diaspora only emerged as a result of violence *in* the Punjab. In her analysis of Punjabi/Sikh/*Jat* migrants in early twentieth century California, Karen Leonard refers to a *Punjabi*, not a Sikh, diaspora (Leonard 1990:120). For Verne A. Dusenbery, a localized territorial identity based upon the village co-existed with a deterritorialized religious identity in overseas communities for much of the last century. Members of the same Punjabi village settled overseas might share a sense of community with their local *bhum bhai* (brothers of the earth) without expecting all villagers to be *guru bhai* (coreligionists) (Dusenbery 1995: 23-4). The boundary created by violence served to sever the links between *bhum bhai* whilst reinforcing the links that bound *guru bhai* together. A localized, Punjabi identity, therefore, gave way to a *globalized* Sikh identity in the diaspora mediated through graphic images of tortured political prisoners and an obliterated *Akal Takht* on the Internet, uniting Sikhs in London, Vancouver and Singapore.[15]

Conclusion

In this short article it has been argued that Sikh diaspora nationalism can only be understood with reference to three interrelated narratives of Sikh identity: the Sikhs as a world religion, nation and diaspora. According to the nationalist discourse in the diaspora, Sikhs are seen to constitute an ethno-religious community forced from their 'homeland 'of the Punjab and into the diaspora by partition and the destruction of the *Akal Takht* in 1984. The effect of this discourse has been to simultaneously *globalize* and *territorialize* Sikh identity by instilling a sense of the global unity of all Sikhs *through* an involvement in the politics of the 'homeland'.

The convergence of Indian state repression in the Punjab and digital technology on Sikhs living outside of India has created the possibility of a new form 'imagined community': the Sikh diaspora. Like the nation before it, the diaspora is imagined as 'finite and sovereign' (Anderson 1991: 46). Membership of the Sikh diaspora is finite in that it is limited to those Sikhs living outside of India who regard East Punjab as the 'ancestral homeland' *irrespective of their actual place of origin*. In this sense, Sikh identity is territorialized. Furthermore, the Sikh diaspora asserts the sovereignty of *all* Sikhs, *irrespective of place of settlement*, over the 'ancestral homeland'. This challenges not only the legitimacy of the Indian state's use of force within the Punjab but also the legitimacy of the Westphalian international order based on the existence of a system or society of territorialized sovereign states (Shani 2000a). Digital capitalism has, therefore, made the imagination of a *global* Sikh diasporic identity possible through the Internet in the same way as print capitalism made the imagination of a Sikh national identity possible in the colonial period. Central to the imagination of both diaspora and nation, is a territorially defined ancestral homeland.

Notes

[1] This article is a substantially revised version of a paper presented at Roskilde University, Denmark as part of a conference entitled *Sovereign Bodies: Citizenship, Community and State in the Postcolonial World*, 11-14 December 2000. I wish to thank Brian Keith Axel, Oivind Fuglerlud, Gurharpal Singh, Peter van der Veer, and two anonymous reviewers of Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism for their comments.

[2] See G. Singh (1999) for a critique of Tatla and Appadurai's theses.

[3] The politics of homeland may be seen as an attempt to seek international recognition of Sikh particularity through acceptance into a system of states. To this end, the Council of Khalistan, on behalf of the Sikh nation, sought Non-Governmental Status at the United Nations in 1987 and briefly gained membership of the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisation (UNPO) (Aulukh 2000b).

[4] Those merchants and traders claiming to belong to the *Kshatriya* caste.

[5] See Bhachu (1985) for an account of the experiences of ramgharias from East Africa.

[6] White (Caucasian).

[7] Majority agricultural caste.

[8] This distinction was suggested to me by Gurharpal Singh. See G. Singh (1999:303).

[9] See Shani (2000b).

[10] Deterritorialized in this context merely refers to movement from a "homeland" irrespective of whether the migration was forced or voluntary.

[11] Transnational in this context refers to interstate or global flows and networks.

[12]Cohen in his introduction to the series of global diasporas, had earlier distinguished between victim, labor, trade, imperial and cultural diasporas. Unlike the vast majority of South Asian diasporas, the Sikhs were not indentured laborers and therefore do not correspond to Cohen's definition of a labor diaspora. A case could, however, be made for including the first wave of male, *Jat* Sikhs into the UK as a labor diaspora, with *khatris* forming a trade diaspora.

[13] Tatla provides brief histories of these organizations in North America (Tatla 1999: 116-122) and the United Kingdom (Tatla 1999: 138-43).

[14] Dr. Jagjit Singh Chauhan was in conversation with the author 17 February 2000.

[15] See Gunawardena (2000) for an analysis of the Sikh nationalist discourse in cyberspace.

References

Anderson, Benedict. 1991. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* 1st edn. 1983. London: Verso.

Appardurai, Arjun. 1990. 'Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy', in Mike Featherstone (ed.), *Global Culture: Nationalism, Globalization and Modernity*. London: Sage.

Axel, Brian Keith. 2001. *The Nation's Tortured Body: Violence, Representation, and the Formation of a Sikh "Diaspora".* Durham and London: Duke University Press.

Bhachu, Parminder. 1985. *Twice Migrants*. London: Tavistock Publications.

Brass, Paul. R. 1974. *Language, Religion and Politics in North India.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Clifford, James. 1997. *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Cohen, Robin. 1997. *Global Diasporas: An Introduction*. London: UCL Press.

Council of Sikh Affairs. 1983. *Compendium of Statements and Resolutions*. Chandigarh: SGPC Publications.

Deol, Harnik. 2000. *Religion and Nationalism in India: The Case of the Punjab*. London: Routledge.

Dusenbery, Verne A. 1995. 'A Sikh Diaspora? Contested Identities and Constructed Realities', in Peter Van der Veer (ed.), *Nation and Migration*. Philadelphia; University of Pennsylvania Press.

Dusenbery, Verne A. 1999. 'Nation or World Religion? : Master Narratives of Sikh Identity', in Pashaura Singh and N. Gerald Barrier (eds.), *Sikh Identity: Continuity and Change*. New Delhi: Manohar.

Fox, Richard G. 1985. *Lions of the Punjab: Culture in the Making*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Grewal, Jagtar S. 1999. 'Nabha's *Ham Hindu Nahin*: A Declaration of Sikh Ethnicity' in Pashaura Singh and N. Gerald Barrier (eds.), *Sikh Identity: Continuity and Change*. New Delhi: Manohar.

Gunawardena, Sue. 2000. 'Constructing Cybernationalism: Sikh Solidarity via the Internet', *International Journal of Punjab Studies*, 7, 2: 263-323.

Kapur, Rajiv A. 1986. *Sikh Separatism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Khilnani, Sunil. 1997. *The Idea of India*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Macauliffe, Max Arthur. 1990. *The Sikh Religion*. 1st edn 1909. Delhi: Low Price Publications.

Mann, Gurinder Singh. 2001. 'Canon Formation in the Sikh Religion', in Christopher Shackle *et al.*, *Sikh Religion, Culture and Ethnicity*. London: Curzon Press.

McLeod, Hew. 1989.*Who is a Sikh ? The problem of Sikh Identity*. Oxford : Oxford University Press.

McLeod, Hew. 1994. 'Cries of Outrage: History versus Tradition in the study of the Sikh Community', *South Asia Research* 14,1: 121-134.

Leonard, Karen. 1990. 'Pioneer Voices from California: Reflections on Race, Religion and Ethnicity', in N. Gerald Barrier and Verne A. Dusenbery (eds.), *The Sikh Diaspora: Migration and Experience Beyond the Punjab*. Delhi; Chanakya Publications.

Oberoi, Harjot. 1994. *The Construction of Religious Boundaries*: *Culture, Identity and Diversity in the Sikh Tradition*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Pettigrew, Joyce M. 1995. *Sikhs of the Punjab: Unheard Voices of State and Guerilla Violence*. London: Zed Books.

Safran, William. 1991. 'Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return', *Diaspora* 1,1: 83-99.

Shani, Giorgio. 2000a. 'The Politics of Recognition: Sikh Diasporic Nationalism and the International Order', *International Journal of Punjab Studies* 7, 2: 193-223.

Shani, Giorgio. 2000b.'The Construction of a Sikh National Identity', *South Asia Research* 20,1: 3-18.

Singh, Darshan. 'Khalsa in Comparative Perspective', *International Journal of Punjab Studies* Vol. 6, 2: 170-185.

Singh, Gurharpal. 1999.'A Victim Diaspora? The Case of the Sikhs', *Diaspora* 8,3: 293-309.

Singh, Gurharpal. 2000. *Ethnic Conflict in India: A Case Study of Punjab. London*: Macmillan.

Singh, Surjan. 1982. *Case for the Republic of Khalistan*. Vancouver: Babbar Khalsa Press.

Smith, Anthony D. 1996. 'Memory and Modernity: reflections on Ernest Gellner's theory of Nationalism', *Nations and Nationalism*, 2, 3:371-388.

Smith, Anthony D. 1999. *Myths and Memories of the Nation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Tatla, Darshan Singh. 2001. 'Imagining Punjab: Narratives of Nationhood and Homeland among the Sikh Diaspora', in Christopher Shackle *et al* (eds.), *Sikh Religion, Culture and Ethnicity*. London: Curzon Press.

Tatla, Darshan Singh. 1999. *The Sikh Diaspora: The Search for Statehood*. London: UCL Press.

Tölölian, Khachig. 1991. 'The Nation State and its Others: In Lieu of a Preface', *Diaspora* 1,1:1-10.

Uberoi, Jit .P.S. 1996. Religion, Civil Society and the State: A Study of Sikhism. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Websites

Aulukh, Gurmit S. 2000a. *Millennium Message to the Sikh Nation*. (www.khalistan.com/message2000.1)

Aulukh, Gurmit S. 2000b. *Khalistan Recognized by UNPO*. (www.khalistan.com/un-test 2.htm)

Osan, Sukbhir S. 2000. *Genocide of Sikhs*. (http://burningpunjab.com/pages/geno-1.html)

Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee. 1946. *Resolution of Sikh State*. (www.maboli.com/sikh_hr/pages/documents/1946resolution.html)

Giorgio Shani is a lecturer in the Department of International Relations, Kitakyushu University, Japan. He is currently writing up his PhD thesis in the Department of Political Studies, School of Oriental and African Studies (University of London).